

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

This research looked at how *Green Book* (2018) shows interracial relation. The study used two main theories. The first is Stuart Hall's theory of representation, which explains how meaning is made in media and how it can reflect and shape the way people think about others and social groups. The second is Kress and van Leeuwen's theory of visual grammar, which explains how images and visual elements, such as camera angle, lighting, character position, and gaze, communicate meaning without the need for words. The analysis shows that the interracial relationship between Don Shirley and Tony Lip is represented as a slow and developing journey from a purely professional connection to a close personal friendship. This relationship develops through shared travel experiences, moments of mutual help, and exposure to discrimination in different social settings. For example, Tony helps Don in dangerous situations during their tour, while Don teaches Tony how to write more heartfelt letters to his wife. Both the narrative and the visuals in the film support this growth, using scenes that place them in shared physical spaces, depict direct conversation, and show close-up shots of their facial expressions to emphasize emotional change. The film challenges racial stereotypes by portraying Don Shirley as refined, disciplined, and highly talented. He does not fit the common portrayals of Black men in popular media, he is not aggressive or loud, but calm, articulate, and independent. His choice to play classical music instead of the genres expected from him in the 1960s is a deliberate act of self-definition. This representation resists the dominant stereotypes that often link Black identity to certain limited roles. At the same time, the film also reinforces certain stereotypes through its focus on Tony's perspective. Many important scenes are framed around Tony's reactions and decisions, giving him the role

of problem-solver and emotional guide. This structure reflects the “white savior” pattern found in other Hollywood films, where the white character’s journey becomes the central emotional focus.

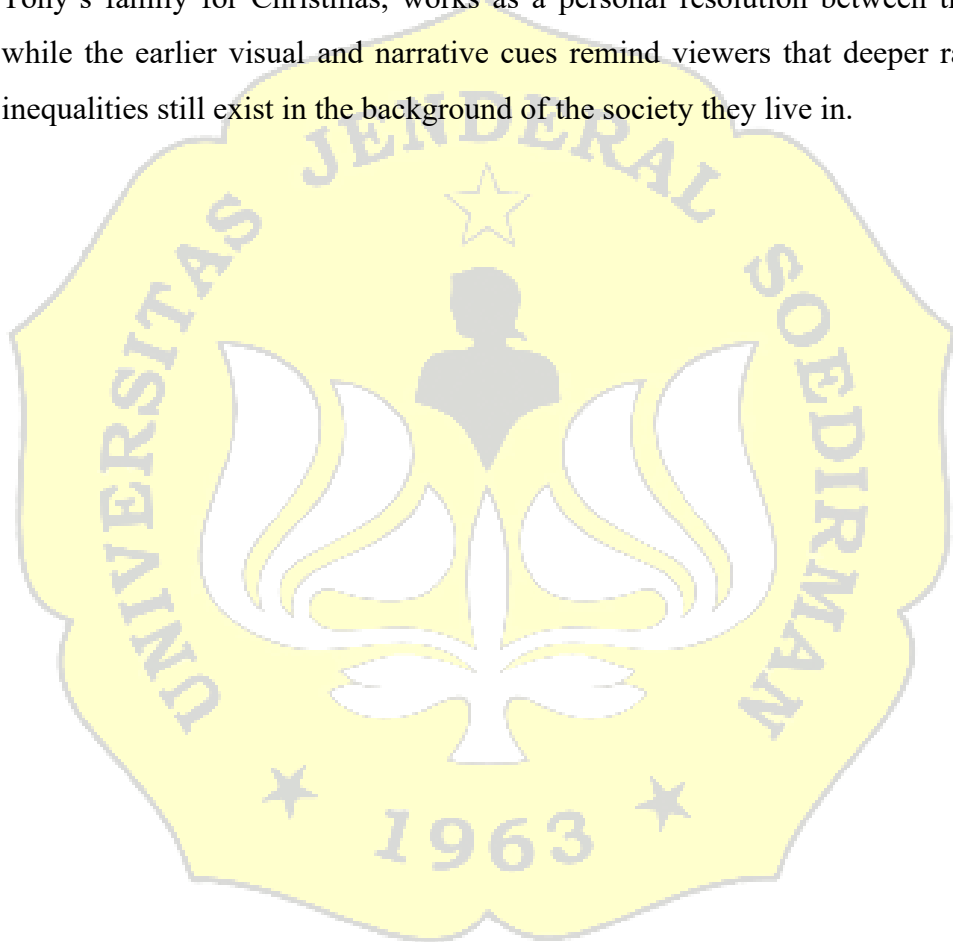
A significant factor in their dynamic is that Tony is a White Italian American, not a “pure” White Anglo-American. While Tony still benefits from white privilege in most situations, his Italian background makes him slightly outside the mainstream white majority. This cultural distance allows him to adapt more easily to Black social spaces, as he shares a sense of being “different” from dominant white society. Don, on the other hand, is an upper-class Black man who remains socially alienated despite his wealth, education, and professional success. This difference explains why Tony is welcomed in both white and Black environments, while Don experiences exclusion in white-dominated settings.

Several scenes clearly show this contrast. In one scene, Tony is warmly welcomed by a group of Black drivers when joining a dice game (Image 6). His body language, relaxed posture, and friendly gaze match the group’s openness. In another, Don is left standing alone on a balcony during a white-dominated party (Image 4), framed in a medium-long shot with greater social distance, which visually communicates isolation. These moments reflect how whiteness, even when linked to an ethnic minority like Italian Americans, still grants broader social access than Blackness, regardless of personal achievements.

The application of Hall’s representation theory and Kress and van Leeuwen’s visual grammar makes these dynamics more visible. In representational meaning, narrative structures like vector lines between characters and objects show whether there is engagement or separation. In interactive meaning, Don is often shown with an indirect gaze or placed further from the camera, creating a sense of distance for the viewer. Tony, in contrast, is frequently captured with a direct gaze and closer social distance, creating familiarity. In compositional meaning, Tony is often placed in the center or

given high salience through brighter lighting and larger visual space, while Don is sometimes framed at the margins or in darker tones, signaling exclusion.

Overall, *Green Book* (2018) presents an interracial friendship that grows through shared challenges and mutual respect. It challenges certain stereotypes by giving Don a dignified and unique identity but also keeps structural patterns that center the white character's role in the story. The ending, where Don joins Tony's family for Christmas, works as a personal resolution between them, while the earlier visual and narrative cues remind viewers that deeper racial inequalities still exist in the background of the society they live in.



5.2 Recommendations

This research opens several opportunities for further study on race and representation in film. Future researchers are encouraged to examine a wider range of films that portray interracial Relation, not only from the same period as *Green Book* (2018) but also from different historical settings and cultural contexts. By comparing films set in various time periods, such as the civil rights era, the post-apartheid period, or the modern multicultural age, researchers can see how stories of racial harmony or tension are shaped by the values and conflicts of each era. Looking at productions from outside Hollywood, such as European, Asian, or African cinema, may also reveal different approaches to representing racial identity, power, and friendship. These comparisons could show whether the patterns found in *Green Book* (2018) are common across different industries or unique to a Hollywood style of storytelling.

Exploring more recent films can also offer alternative perspectives on how racial identities are constructed and challenged in media today. Modern productions often work with more diverse casts, directors, and writers, which can influence the way racial issues are addressed. Such films might present interracial Relation in ways that break away from the narrative patterns and visual codes that have dominated earlier decades. Examining these works could provide insights into whether progress in representation is truly being made, or whether certain stereotypes still remain in updated forms.

Another promising direction for research is to expand the analysis by incorporating audience reception studies. Understanding how different viewers respond to films like *Green Book* (2018) can add a valuable dimension to the discussion. Audience reactions may vary based on race, nationality, age, education, or personal experience with cultural difference. For example, Black audiences might focus more on Don Shirley's isolation and struggle to negotiate identity, while white audiences might connect more strongly with Tony's personal growth within the friendship. Studying these varied interpretations

could reveal how films influence emotional identification, reinforce or challenge cultural perceptions, and contribute to the internalization of ideas about interracial interaction and social belonging.

Researchers are also encouraged to examine the intersection between race, class, and space in cinematic representation. As seen in *Green Book* (2018) physical environments, such as balconies, stages, hotel rooms, or segregated venues, play a critical role in visually constructing ideas of inclusion and exclusion. A balcony scene, for example, can be used to place a character on the “outside” of social interaction, while a stage might highlight a person’s talent but still separate them from the audience. These spatial arrangements are not just background details; they carry symbolic meaning and can be read as visual metaphors for social hierarchies.

By focusing on how physical spaces are designed and filmed, future studies can uncover the hidden ways in which films reproduce or challenge systems of power. Combining this spatial analysis with theories of representation and visual grammar would allow scholars to explore how location, camera placement, and character positioning work together to communicate deeper social messages. In continuing this line of inquiry, academic work can contribute to a richer understanding of how film, as a cultural product, both shapes and reflects the racial and social dynamics of the societies in which it is made and consumed.